



US009414742B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Sato

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,414,742 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Aug. 16, 2016**

(54) **ENDOSCOPE CONNECTION INSTRUMENT
AND ENDOSCOPE
CLEANING/DISINFECTING APPARATUS**

A61B 1/00121; A61B 1/00128; B08B 9/00;
B08B 9/021; B08B 9/023; B08B 9/027;
B08B 9/032; B08B 9/0321

See application file for complete search history.

(71) Applicant: **OLYMPUS CORPORATION**, Tokyo
(JP)

(56) **References Cited**

(72) Inventor: **Norito Sato**, Hachioji (JP)

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

(73) Assignee: **OLYMPUS CORPORATION**, Tokyo
(JP)

2006/0269442 A1* 11/2006 Nguyen A61B 1/125
422/28
2007/0185385 A1 8/2007 Noguchi et al.
2010/0004510 A1 1/2010 Kuroshima

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

(21) Appl. No.: **14/635,054**

EP 1767140 A1 3/2007
JP 10-234666 A 9/1998
JP 2003-116789 A 4/2003

(22) Filed: **Mar. 2, 2015**

(Continued)

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2015/0173597 A1 Jun. 25, 2015

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Japanese Office Action dated Sep. 2, 2014 issued in JP 2014-532143.

Related U.S. Application Data

Primary Examiner — David Cormier

(63) Continuation of application No. PCT/JP2014/062423,
filed on May 9, 2014.

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Scully, Scott, Murphy &
Presser, PC

(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Jul. 3, 2013 (JP) 2013-139889

(57) **ABSTRACT**

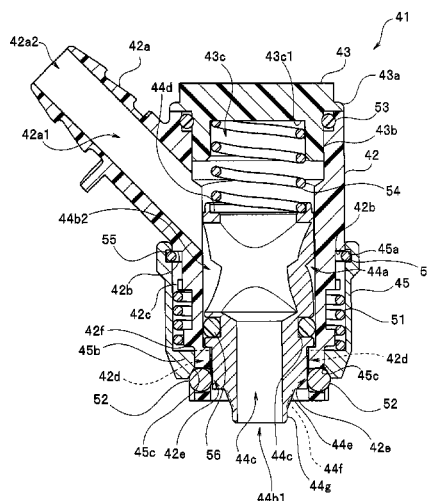
(51) **Int. Cl.**
A61B 1/00 (2006.01)
A61B 1/12 (2006.01)
G02B 23/24 (2006.01)

A fitting pressing member includes: a first opening that opens
inside a fitting of an endoscope; a second opening that is
communicably connected to the first opening and is connect-
able to a fluid supply source; a cylindrical portion formed
from the first opening to a predetermined position, the cylin-
drical portion covering a part of a hollow portion communi-
cably connected to the first opening and the second opening;
a narrowing portion including a side face whose outer diam-
eter increases from the predetermined position toward the
second opening, the narrowing portion covering the other part
of the hollow portion; and a plurality of grooves formed over
a predetermined area from the predetermined position in an
outer surface of the narrowing portion.

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **A61B 1/123** (2013.01); **A61B 1/00128**
(2013.01); **A61B 1/12** (2013.01); **G02B**
23/2476 (2013.01); **Y10T 137/9029** (2015.04)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC A61B 1/12; A61B 1/121; A61B 1/123;
A61B 1/125; A61B 1/126; A61B 1/00112;

12 Claims, 19 Drawing Sheets



(56)

References Cited

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

JP

2006-006565 A 1/2006

JP 2010-011977 A 1/2010
JP 2012-040240 A 3/2012
WO WO 2006/001336 A1 1/2006

* cited by examiner

FIG. 2

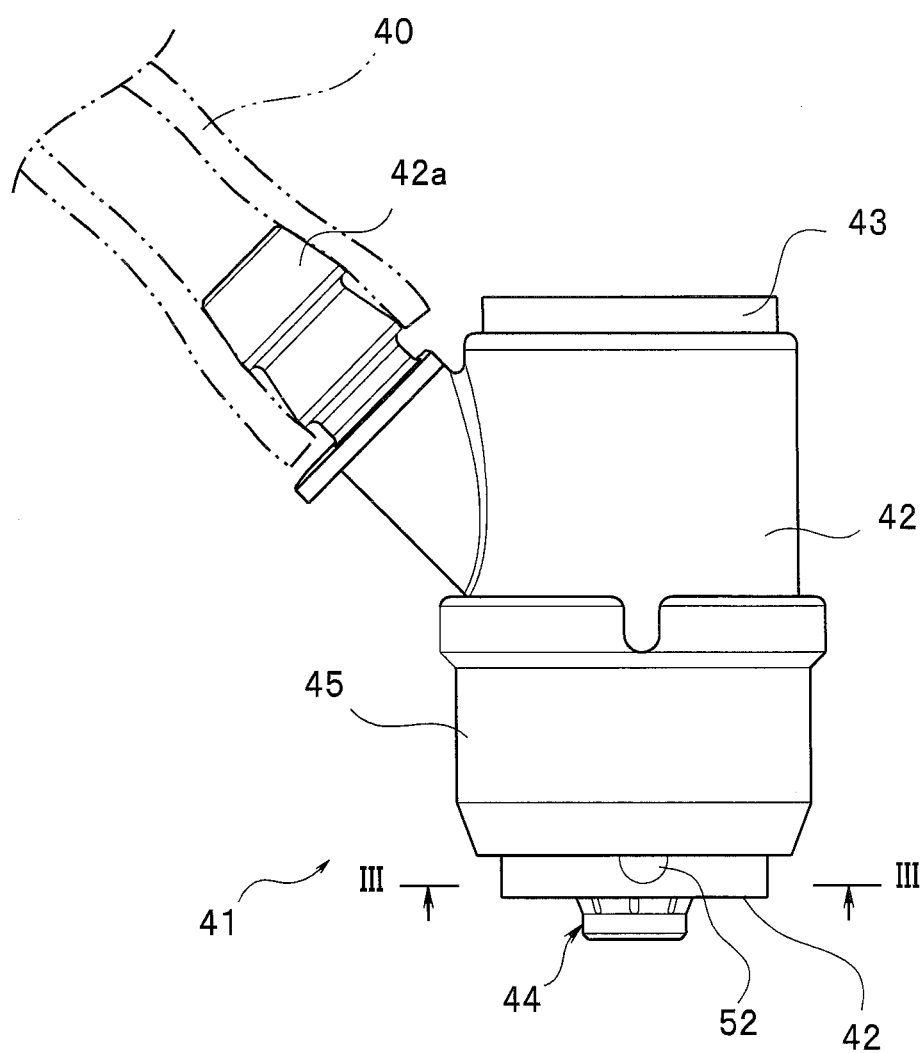


FIG. 3

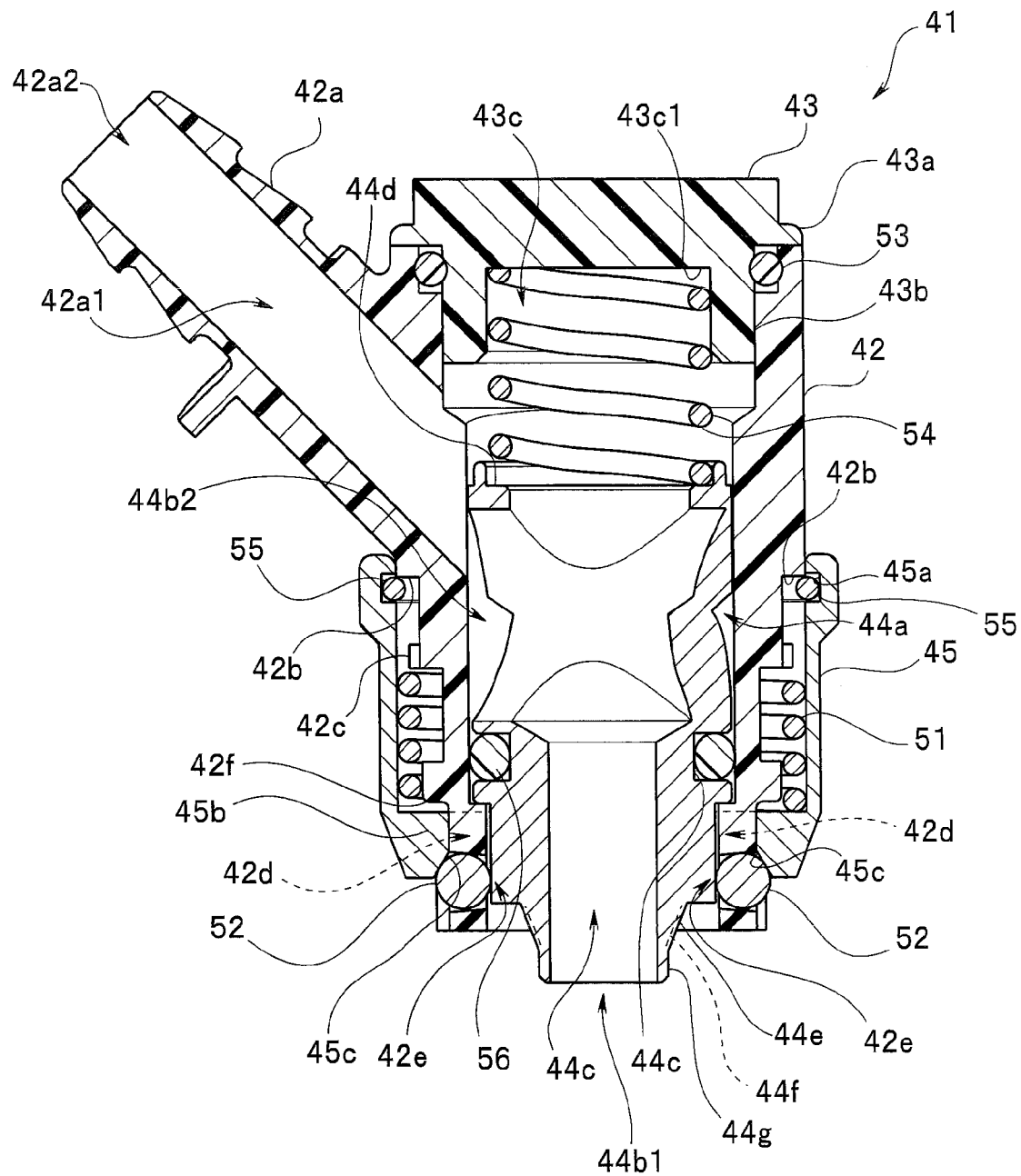


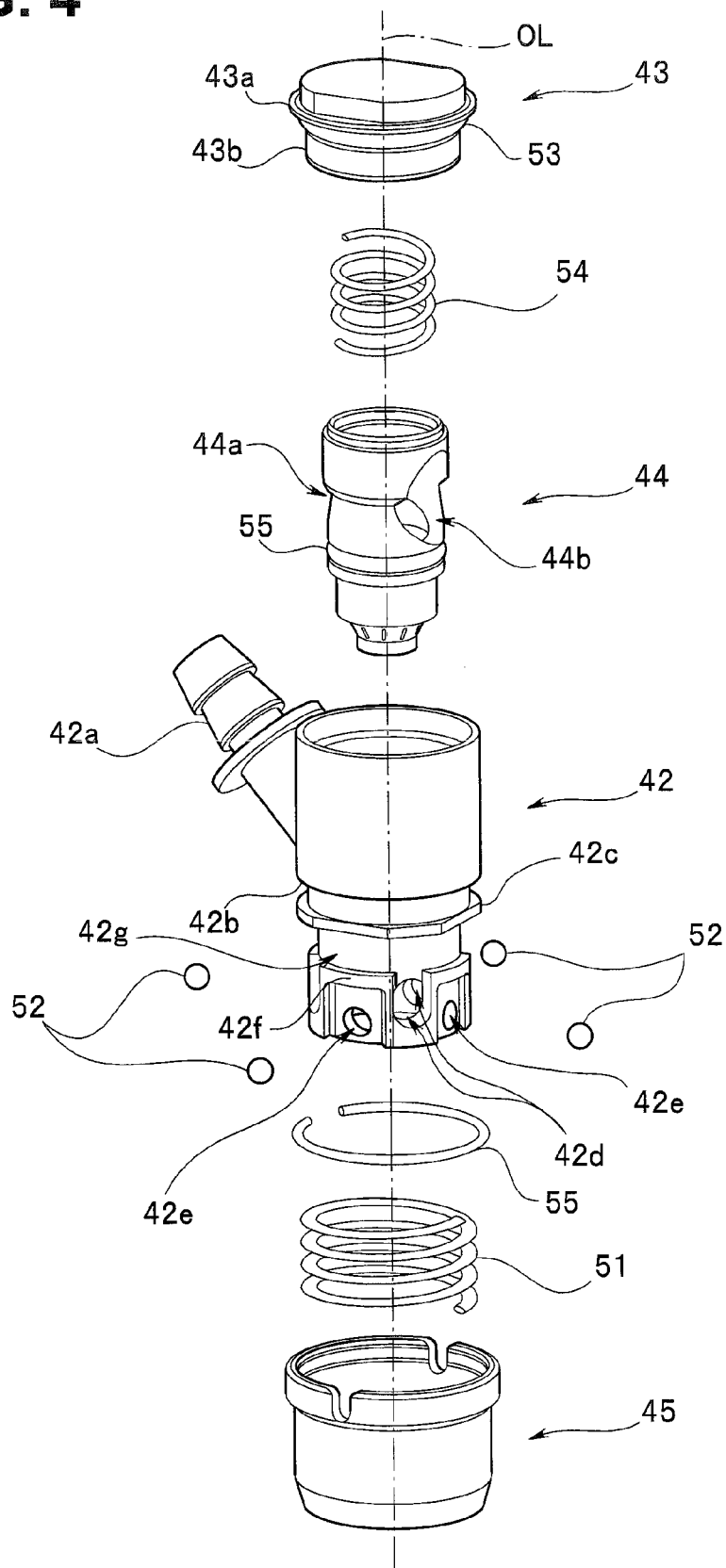
FIG. 4

FIG. 5

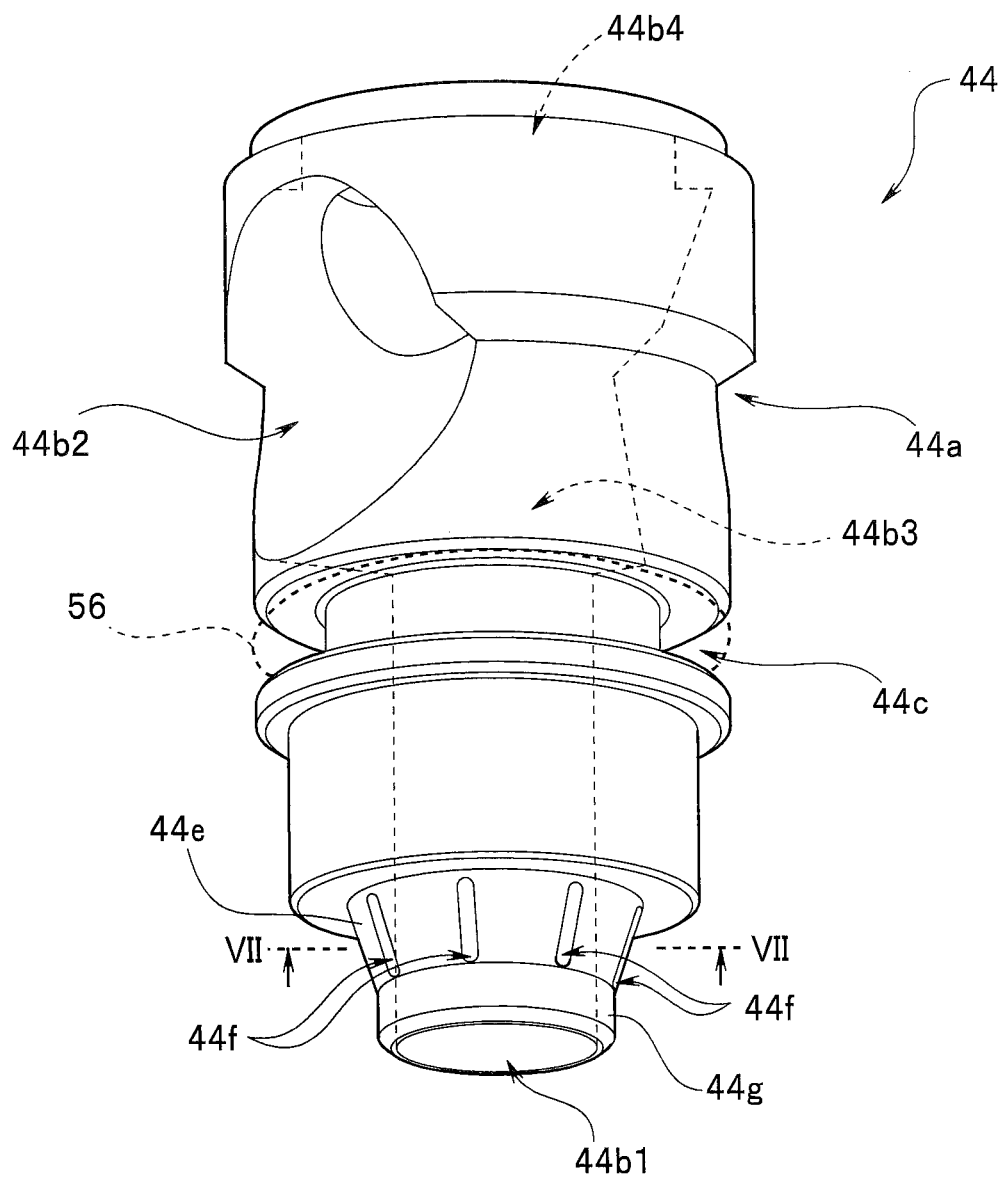


FIG. 6

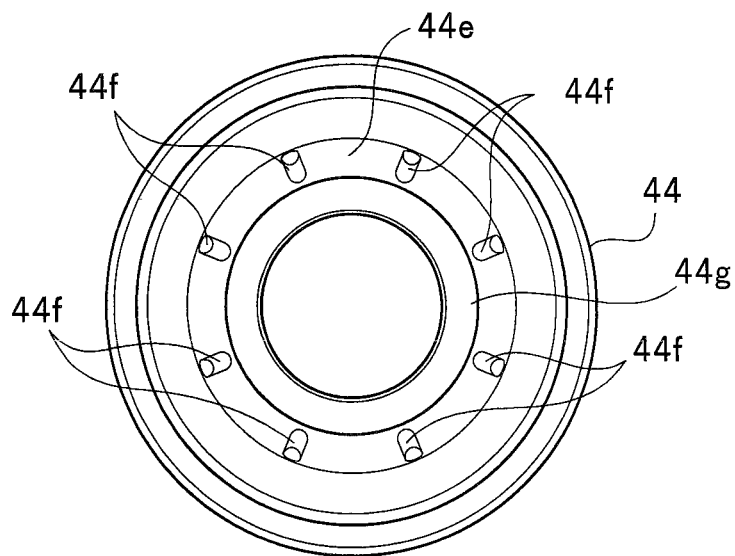


FIG. 7

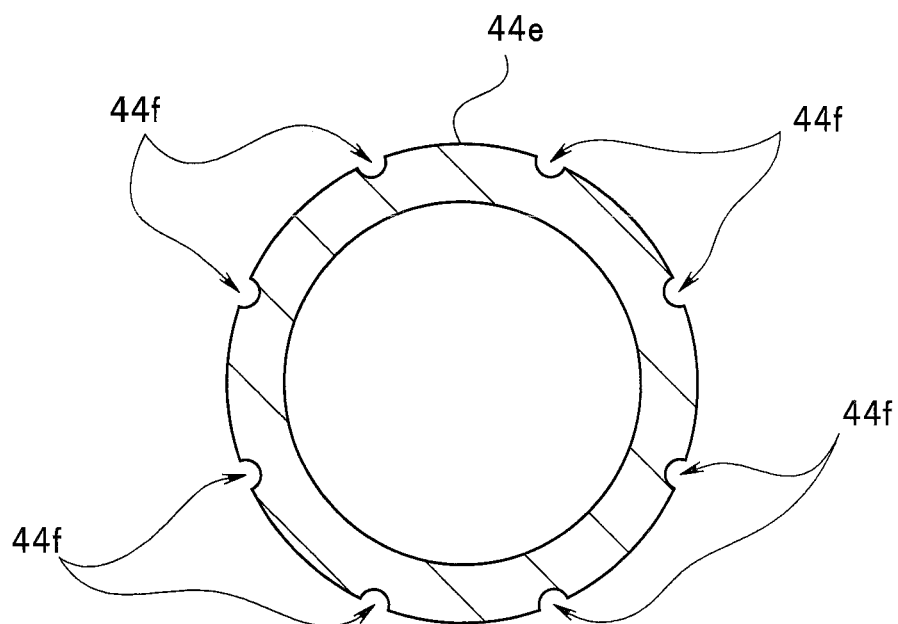


FIG. 8

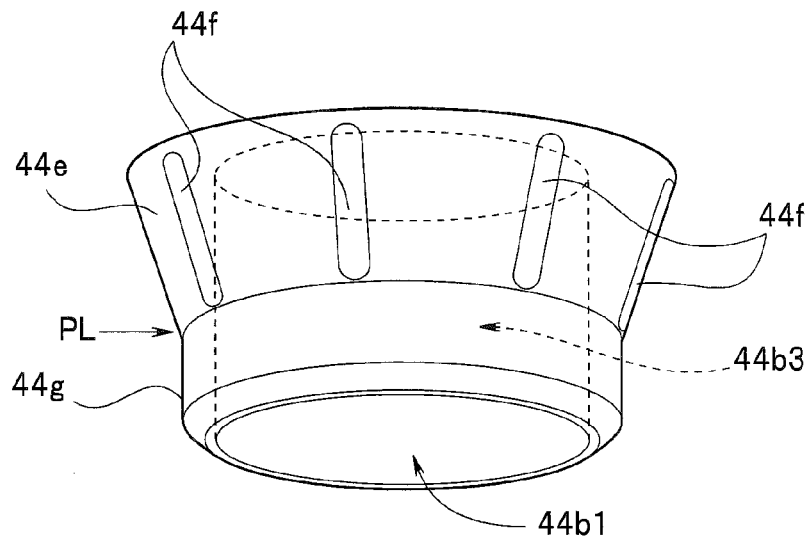
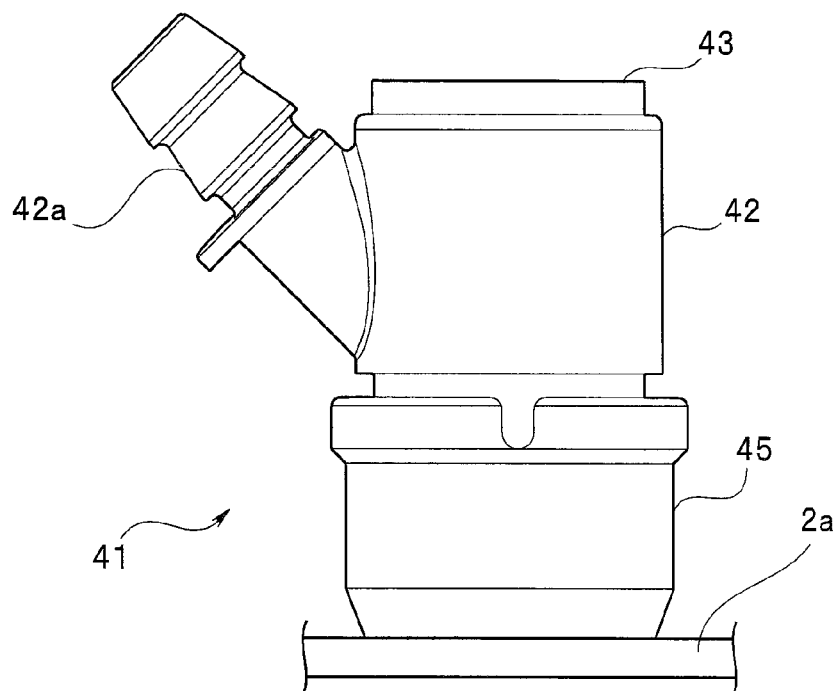
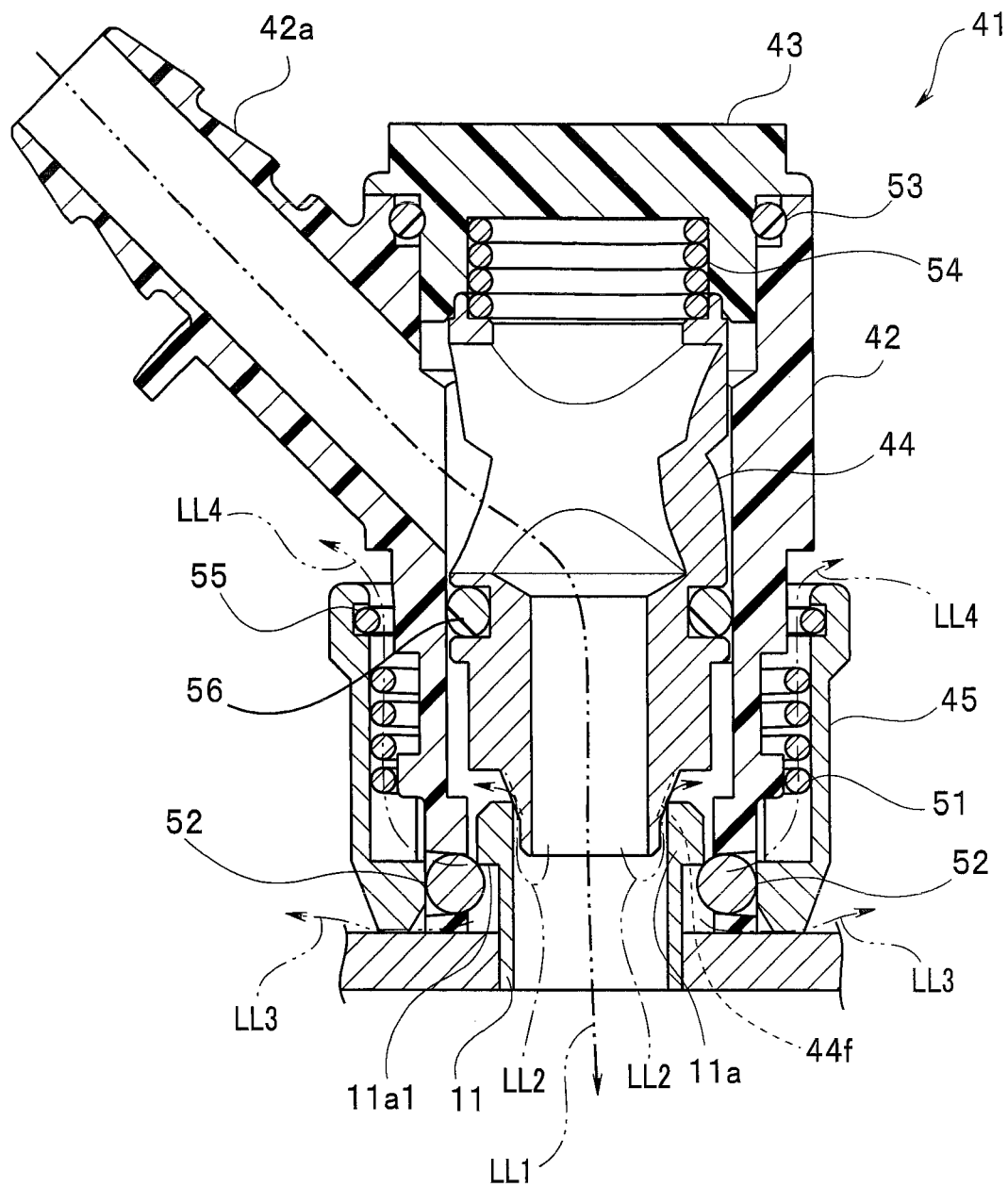


FIG. 9





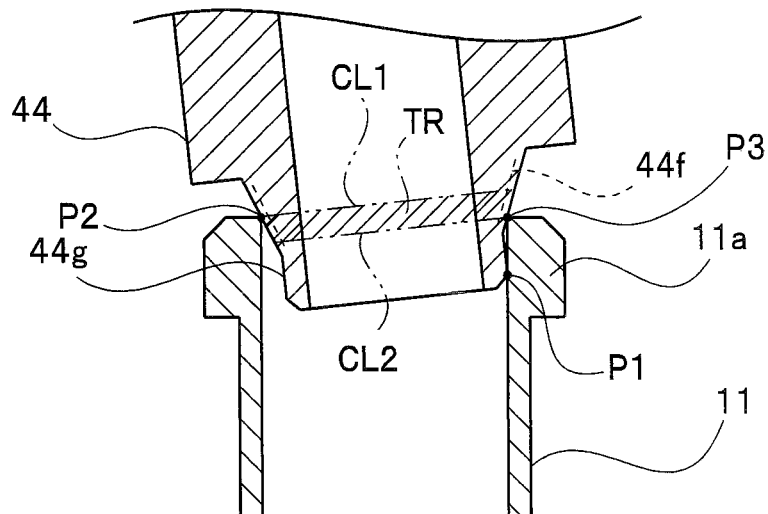


FIG. 12

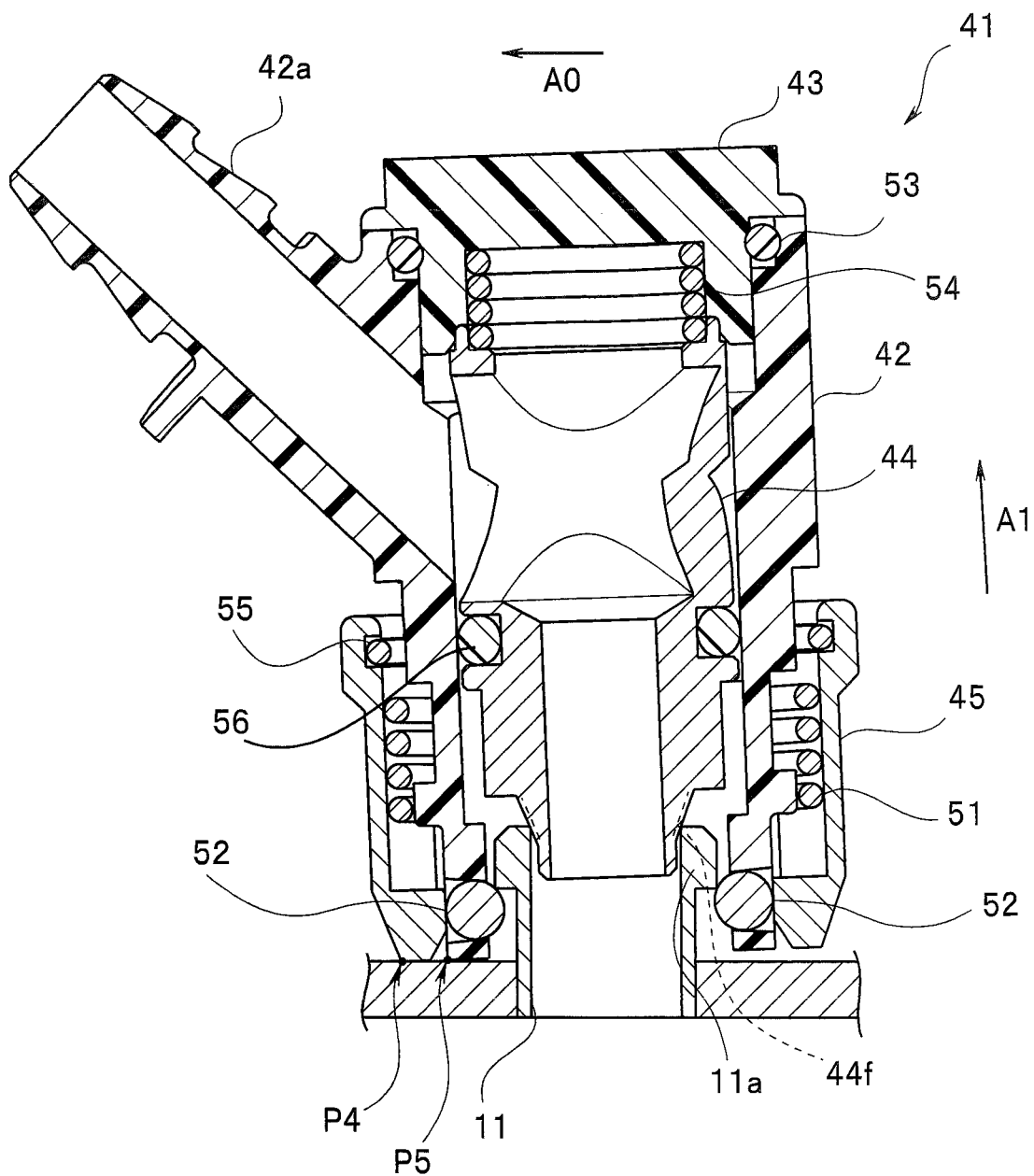


FIG. 13

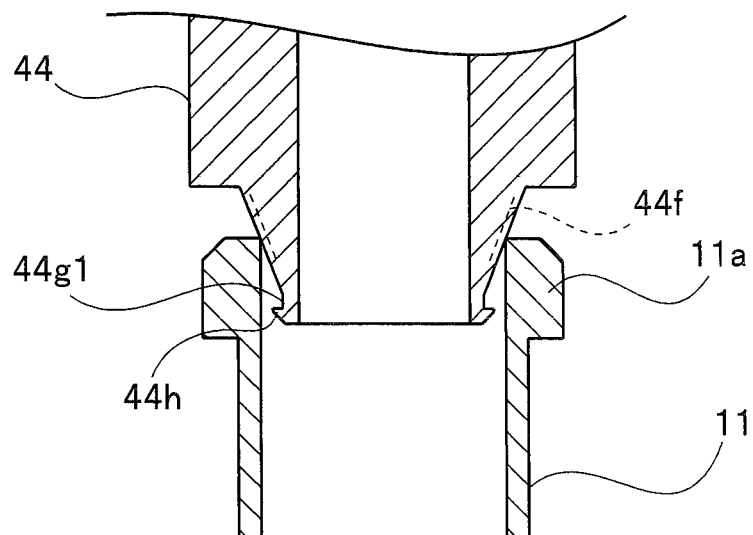


FIG. 14

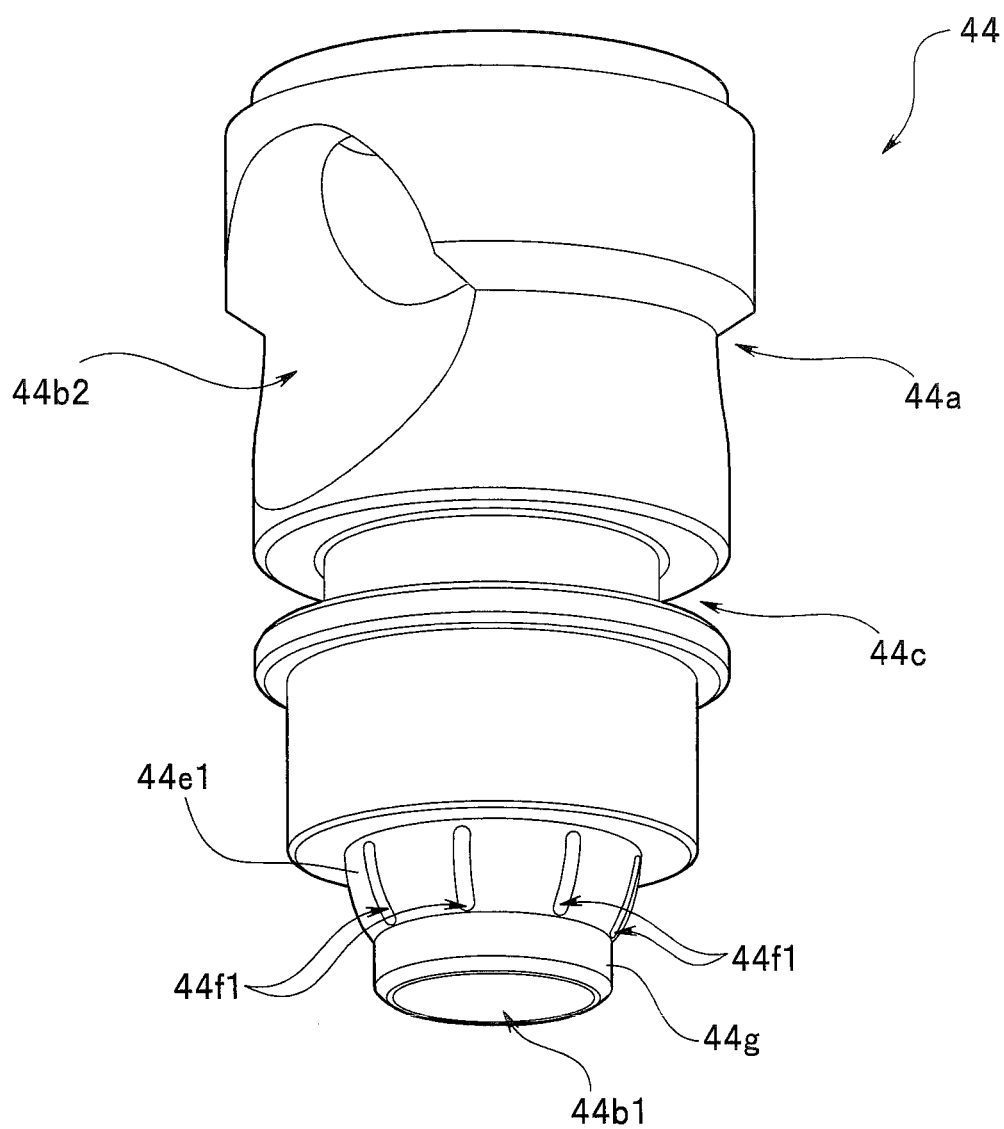


FIG. 15

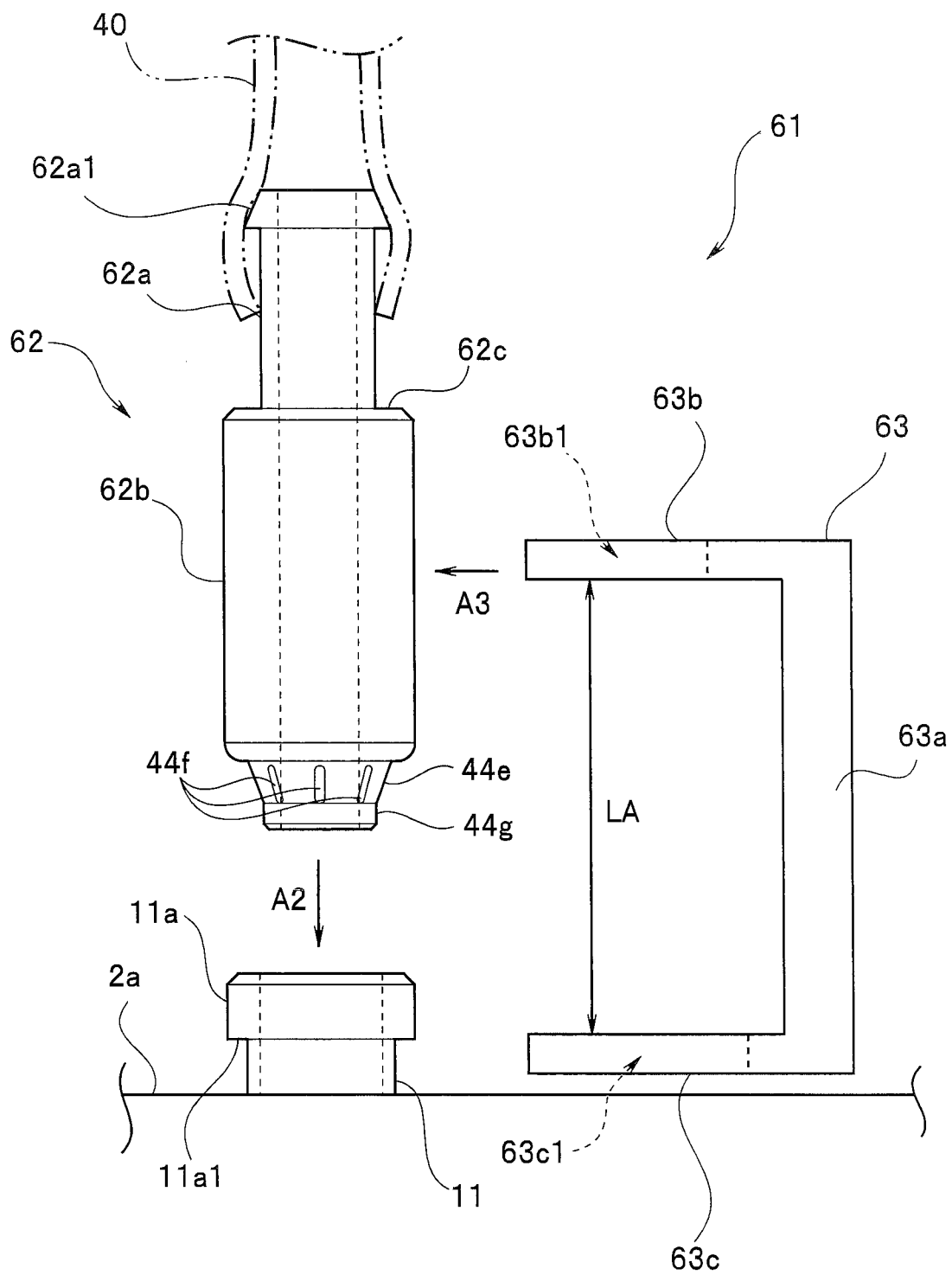


FIG.16

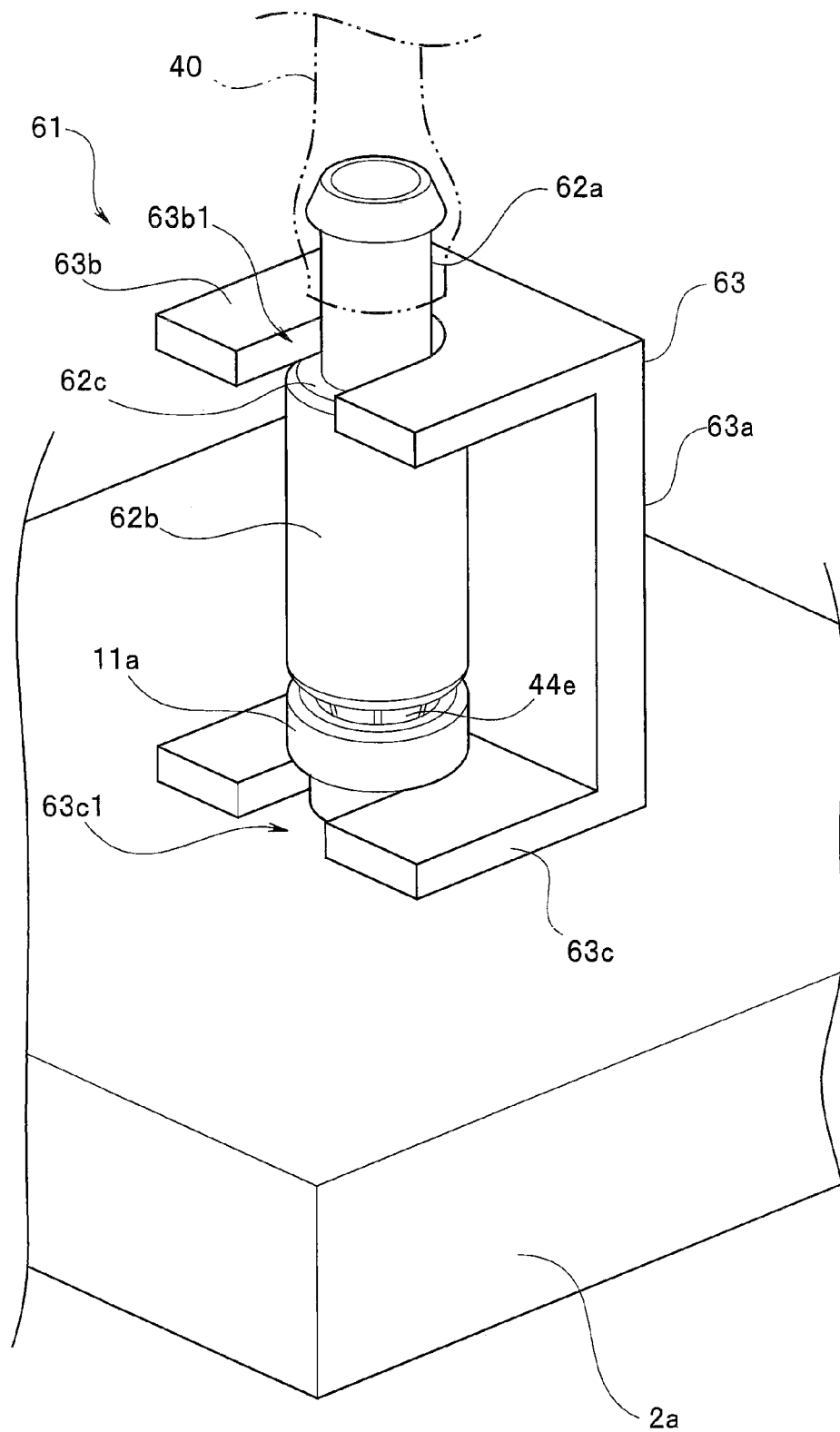


FIG.17

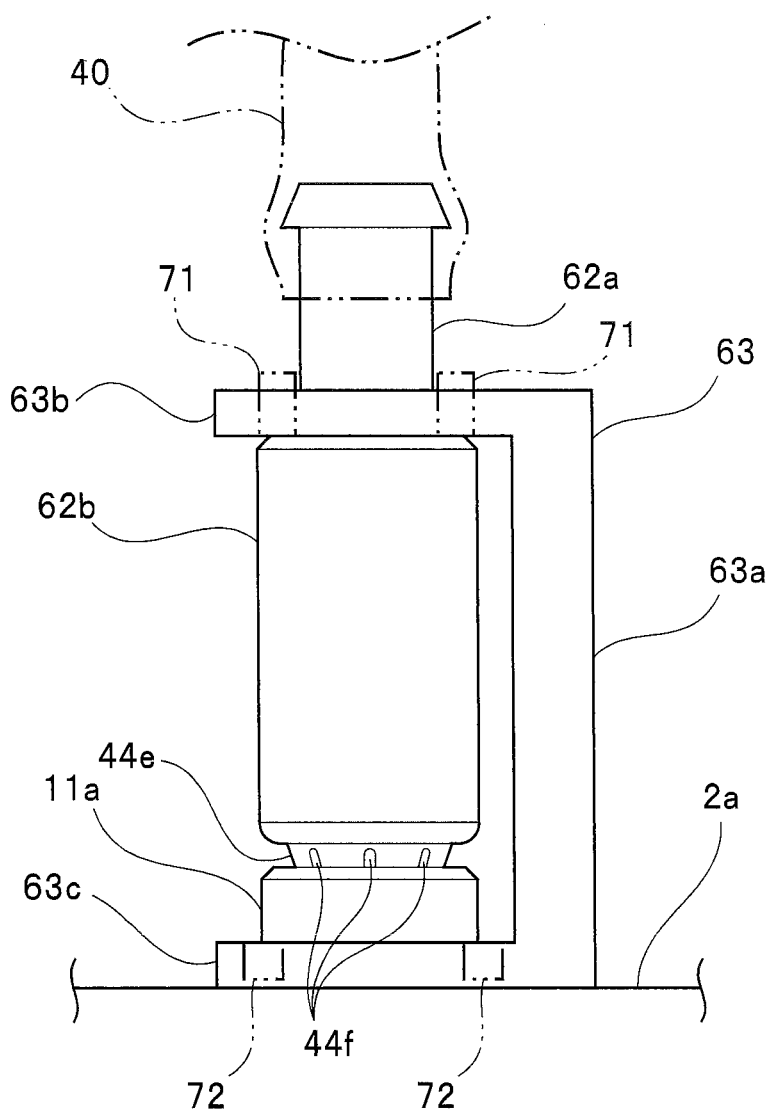


FIG. 18

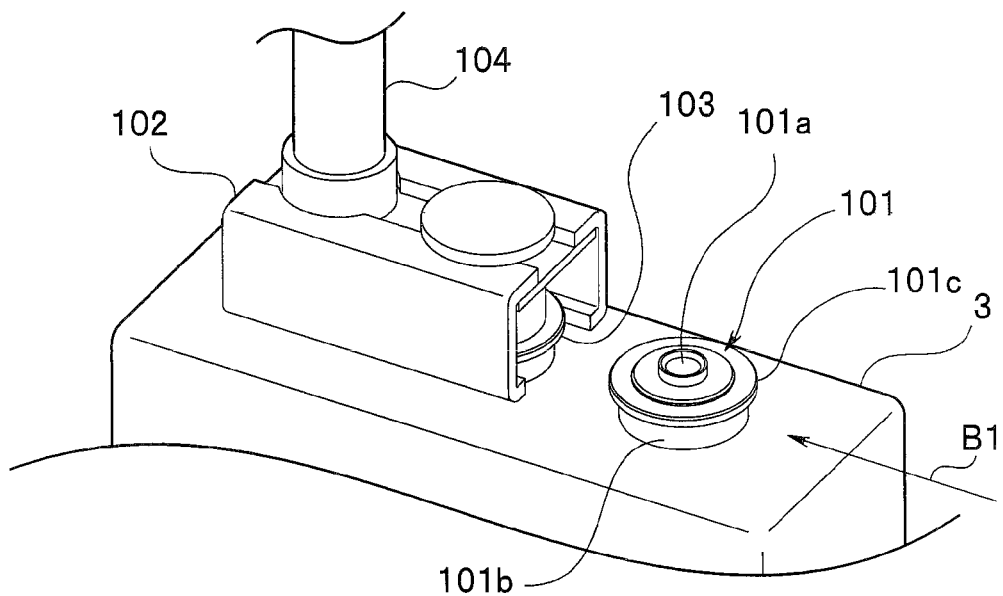


FIG. 19

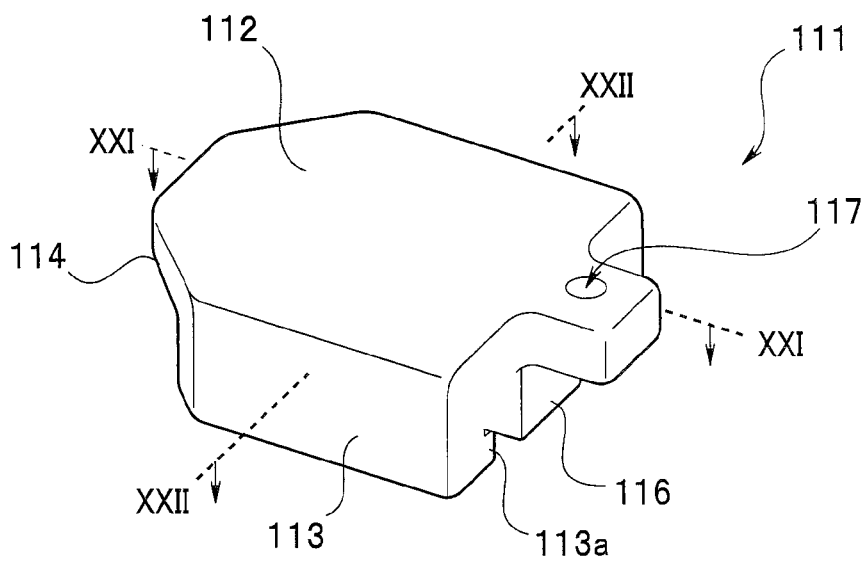


FIG. 20

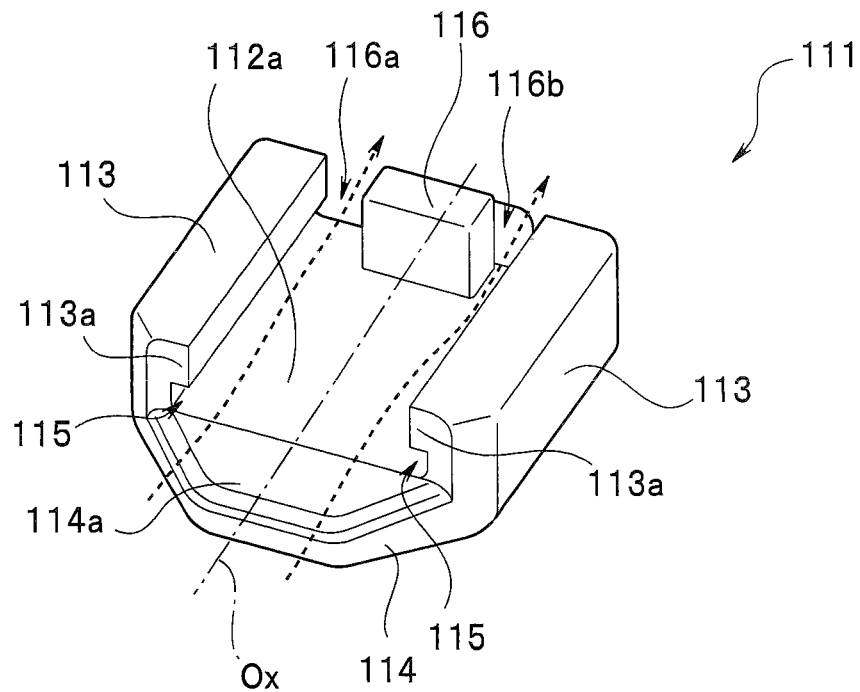


FIG. 21

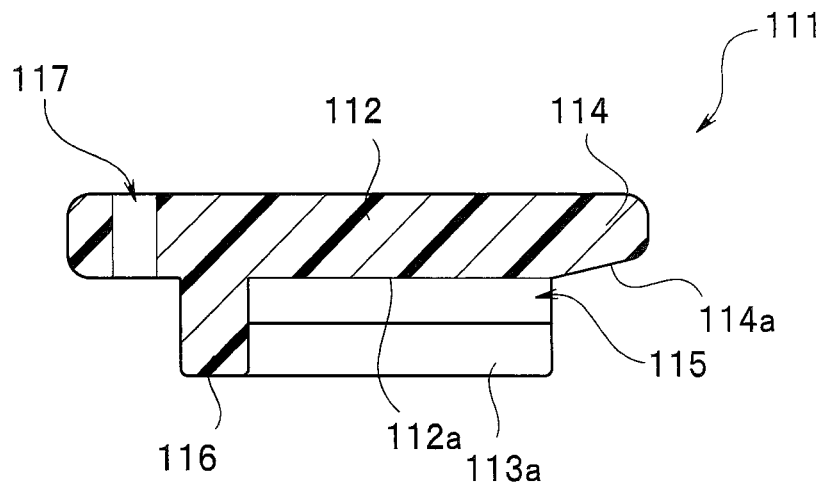


FIG. 22

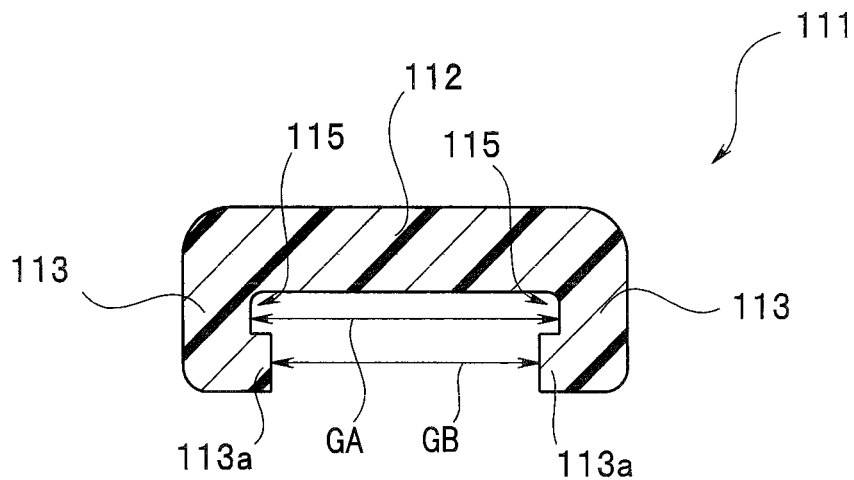


FIG. 23

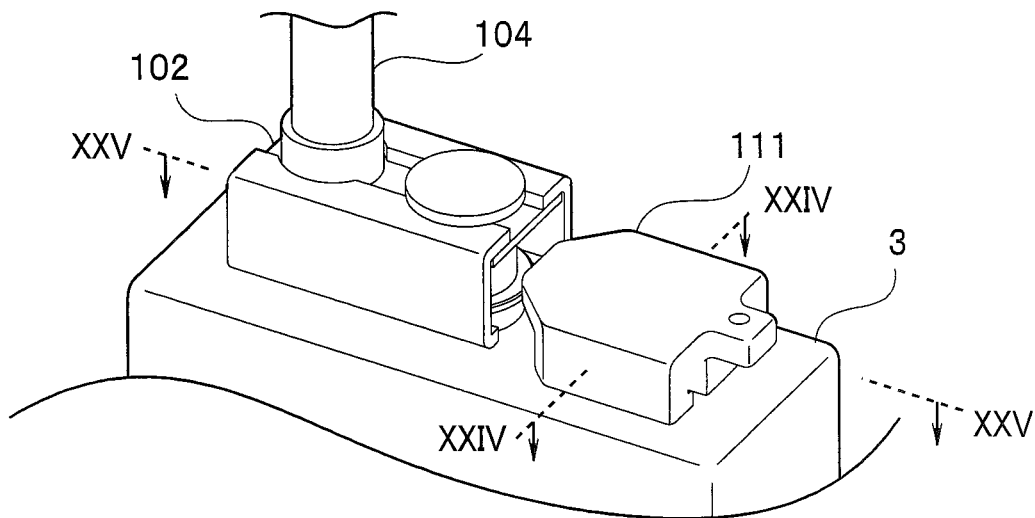


FIG. 24

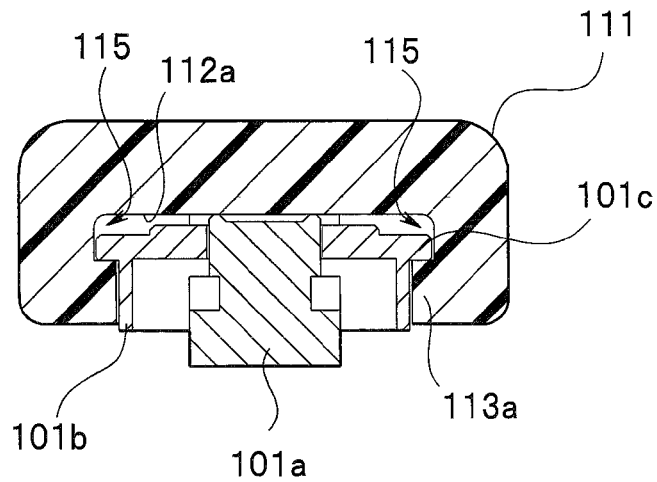
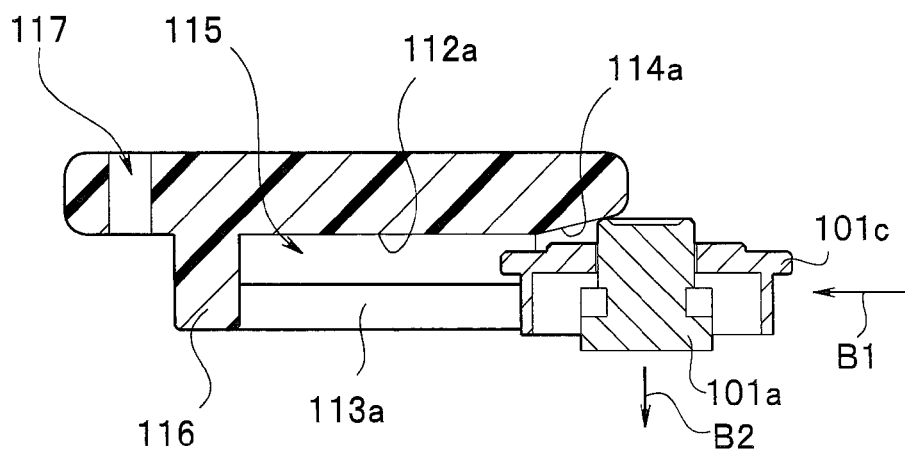


FIG. 25



ENDOSCOPE CONNECTION INSTRUMENT AND ENDOSCOPE CLEANING/DISINFECTING APPARATUS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application is a continuation application of PCT/JP2014/062423 filed on May 9, 2014 and claims benefit of Japanese Application No. 2013-139889 filed in Japan on Jul. 3, 2013, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by this reference.

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to an endoscope connection instrument and an endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus, and specifically relates to an endoscope connection instrument to be connected to an endoscope fitting and an endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus.

2. Description of the Related Art

Conventionally, endoscopes are widely used for examinations and treatments of insides of bodies. Since endoscopes are each inserted into a body, the endoscopes are cleaned after use. Therefore, endoscope cleaning apparatuses for cleansing endoscopes are also widely used.

In endoscope cleaning using an endoscope cleaning apparatus, not only surfaces of the endoscope but also the inside of each of ducts provided inside is cleaned. Thus, fittings communicably connected to respective ducts inside the endoscope and the endoscope cleaning apparatus (hereinafter also simply referred to as "cleaning apparatus") are connected via cleaning tubes, and, e.g., a cleaning liquid, a disinfectant liquid or a rinsing liquid sent from the cleaning apparatus is sent into the respective ducts of the endoscope, whereby the inside of each of the ducts is cleaned and disinfected. Since a connection part between each cleaning tube and the corresponding fitting remains in a close contact state even though some kind of load is imposed on the connection part and the inside of the corresponding duct is hermetically sealed, the flow rate less changes, ensuring a stable capability of cleaning the inside of the duct, and also enabling detection of the cleaning tube coming off from the fitting based on a flow rate change.

Furthermore, various measures for cleaning and disinfecting an outer surface of a connection fitting of an endoscope to which a cleaning tube is connected have been proposed. For example, Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication No. 10-234666 proposes a suction duct cleaning instrument in which a cover barrel that surrounds a periphery of a suction tube connection fitting is provided and a cleaning liquid out-flow hole for allowing a cleaning liquid to flow out is provided in the cover barrel.

Also, Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open Publication No. 2012-40240 discloses a cleaning adapter for an endoscope, and discloses a structure in which a seal member is brought into close contact with an upper face of a valve casing.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An endoscope connection instrument according to an aspect of the present invention which is to be connected to an endoscope fitting, the endoscope connection instrument comprising: a first opening having a predetermined outer diameter in order to open inside the endoscope fitting when the endo-

scope connection instrument is connected to the endoscope fitting; a second opening that is communicably connected to the first opening, is arranged on a fluid supply source side relative to the first opening, and allows a fluid from the fluid supply source to flow therein via a cleaning tube; a hollow portion that is an internal space communicably connected to the first opening and the second opening; a cylindrical portion to be inserted into the endoscope fitting, the cylindrical portion covering a part from the first opening to a predetermined position of the hollow portion; a narrowing portion to be inserted into the endoscope fitting, the narrowing portion including a side face whose outer diameter increases over a predetermined distance from the predetermined position toward the second opening, and covering the hollow portion; and a plurality of grooves formed over a predetermined area from the predetermined position in an outer surface of the narrowing portion.

An endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus according to one aspect of the present invention includes: the endoscope connection instrument of the present invention connected to the endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus via the cleaning tube.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus according to a first embodiment of the present invention, in which a top cover is opened, allowing an endoscope to be received in a cleaning/disinfecting bath;

FIG. 2 is a front view of a connector **41** according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 3 is a cross-sectional view of the connector **41** along line III-III in FIG. 2;

FIG. 4 is an exploded and assembly view of the connector **41** according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a fitting pressing member **44** according to the first embodiment of the present invention as viewed obliquely from underneath;

FIG. 6 is a bottom view of the fitting pressing member **44** according to the first embodiment of the present invention as viewed from underneath;

FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view of a narrowing portion **44e** along line VII-VII in FIG. 5;

FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the part of the narrowing portion **44e** and a cylindrical portion **44g** according to the first embodiment of the present invention as viewed from obliquely underneath;

FIG. 9 is a front view illustrating a state in which the connector **41** is attached to a fitting **11** of an endoscope **2**, according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 10 is a cross-sectional view illustrating a state in which the connector **41** is attached to the fitting **11**, according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 11 is a diagram for describing a state in which the fitting pressing member **44** is most inclined because of the connector **41** rattling, according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 12 is a diagram for describing a state in which the connector rattles, according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 13 is a diagram for describing an example in which a projection portion is provided at a distal end portion of a cylindrical portion of the fitting pressing member **44**, according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 14 is a perspective view of a fitting pressing member including a narrowing portion having a spherical zone shape

3

as viewed obliquely from underneath, according to the first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 15 is a diagram for describing a state before a connector according to a second embodiment of the present invention is attached to a fitting;

FIG. 16 is a perspective view illustrating a state in which a fitting pressing member 62 is fixed to a fitting 11 via a securing member 63, according to the second embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 17 is a front view illustrating a state in which the fitting pressing member 62 is secured to the fitting 11 via the securing member 63, according to the second embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 18 is a diagram illustrating a state in which a sliding apparatus that receives supply of a liquid such as a cleaning liquid and supplies the liquid to an internal cylinder is attached in the vicinity of a gas button at an operation portion 3, according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 19 is a perspective view of an adapter 111 for bringing a gas button 101 into a depressed state as viewed obliquely from above, according to the embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 20 is a perspective view of the adapter 111 as viewed obliquely from underneath, according to the embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 21 is a cross-sectional view of the adapter 111 along line XXI-XXI in FIG. 19;

FIG. 22 is a cross-sectional view of the adapter 111 along line XXII-XXII in FIG. 19;

FIG. 23 is a perspective view illustrating a state in which the adapter 111 is attached to the gas button 101, according to the embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 24 is a cross-sectional view of the adapter 111 along line XXIV-XXIV in FIG. 23 and illustrates a state in which the adapter 111 is attached to the gas button 101; and

FIG. 25 is a cross-sectional view of the adapter 111 along line XXV-XXV in FIG. 23 and illustrates a state of the adapter 111 at a certain position in the course of the adapter 111 being attached to the gas button 101.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT(S)

Embodiments of the present invention will be described below with reference to the drawings.

Note that in each of the drawings used for the below description, components are illustrated on difference scales so that the respective components have sizes that are large enough to be recognized in the drawing, and the present invention is not limited only to the counts and amounts, and the shapes of the components, and the size ratios and the relative positional relationships among the components illustrated in the drawings.

First Embodiment

Overall Configuration of Cleaning/Disinfecting Apparatus

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus in a state in which a top cover is opened, allowing an endoscope to be received in a cleaning/disinfecting bath.

As illustrated in FIG. 1, an endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus 1 is an apparatus for cleaning/disinfecting a used endoscope 2, and a main portion of the endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus 1 includes an apparatus body 10,

4

and on an upper portion thereof, a top cover 12, which is a lid body connected to the apparatus body 10 via, for example, a non-illustrated hinge so as to be openable and closable.

The endoscope 2 includes an operation portion 3, an elongated insertion portion 4 that has flexibility and extends from the operation portion 3, and a universal cable 5 to be connected to, e.g., a processor apparatus. At the operation portion 3, e.g., operation knobs and operation buttons are arranged.

The endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus 1 is configured so that when the top cover 12 is closed on the apparatus body 10, the top cover 12 is secured to the apparatus body 10 via a latch 13.

In, for example, an upper portion of a left half portion of a front face in the figure (hereinafter referred to as "front face") of the apparatus body 10, which is close to an operator, a detergent/alcohol tray 14 is disposed in such a manner that the detergent/alcohol tray 14 can be drawn forward from the apparatus body 10. Also, in, for example, an upper portion of a right half portion of the front face of the apparatus body 10, a cassette tray 15 is disposed in such a manner that the cassette tray 15 can be drawn forward from the apparatus body 10.

Furthermore, in a portion above the cassette tray 15 in the front face of the apparatus body 10, a sub-operation panel 16 with, e.g., a cleaning/disinfecting time period display and an instruction button for heating the disinfectant liquid disposed thereon is disposed. Also, a pedal switch 17 for opening the top cover 12 closed on the upper portion of the apparatus body 10 upward from the apparatus body 10 by a stepping operation by the operator is disposed in a lower portion of the front face in the figure of the apparatus body 10.

Also, a main operation panel 21 with a start switch for cleaning/disinfecting operation of the apparatus body 10 and setting switches such as a cleaning/disinfecting mode selection switch disposed therein is provided, for example, close to opposite ends on the front face side of an upper face of the apparatus body 10, which is close to the operator.

Also, a water supply hose connection part 22 for supplying tap water to the apparatus body 10, to which a water supply hose connected to a tap water faucet is connected, is disposed on a side of the upper face of the apparatus body 10 that faces the front face close to the operator.

Furthermore, a cleaning/disinfecting bath 23 capable of receiving the endoscope 2 is provided in a roughly-center portion of the upper face of the apparatus body 10. The cleaning/disinfecting bath 23 includes a bath body 23a, and a terrace portion 23b continuously provided at an outer circumference of an endoscope receiving opening of the bath body 23a.

When a used endoscope 2 is cleaned/disinfected, the bath body 23a can receive the endoscope 2, and in a bottom face 24, which is a surface inside the bath of the bath body 23a, a drain port 25 for draining, e.g., a cleaning liquid, water, alcohol or a disinfectant liquid supplied to the bath body 23a, from the bath body 23a is provided. Also, at an arbitrary position in a circumferential side face 26, which is a surface inside the bath of the bath body 23a, a circulation port 28 for supplying the aforementioned liquid such as the cleaning liquid, the water, the alcohol or the disinfectant liquid supplied in the bath body 23a to the bath body 23a again is provided.

In the cleaning/disinfecting bath 23, a non-illustrated ultrasound transducer and a non-illustrated heater are disposed on the back face side of the bath body 23a and a duct disinfection port 29 and a cleaning case 30 are disposed in a rough center of the bottom face 24 of the bath body 23a. At an arbitrary position of the side face 26 of the bath body 23a, a water level

5

sensor 31 for detecting, a level of, e.g., the cleaning liquid, the water, the alcohol or the disinfectant liquid supplied to the bath body 23a is provided.

In a face other than a terrace surface of the terrace portion 23b, a detergent nozzle 32 for supplying a cleaning agent to be diluted to obtain a predetermined concentration and a disinfectant liquid nozzle 33 for supplying a diluted and prepared disinfectant liquid are disposed. Furthermore, in the surface parallel to the bottom face 24 of the bath body 23a of the terrace portion 23b, a water supply circulation nozzle 27 is disposed.

Also, in a surface 36 on a side facing a position 35 of the terrace surface 34 of the terrace portion 23b, the position 35 being close to the operator, a plurality, here, two ports 37 for air/water feeding/forceps ports, which are fluid supply portions for supplying, e.g., a cleaning liquid, water, an alcohol, a disinfectant liquid or air to channels, which are endoscope ducts provided inside the endoscope 2, a forceps elevation port 38 and a leakage detection port 39 are disposed.

Also, the endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus 1 according to the present embodiment has a flow control function that detects duct clogging inside the channels of the endoscope 2 during cleaning and disinfecting. Note that since a specific configuration and operation of the flow control function are techniques conventionally used, detailed description thereof will be omitted.

At opposite ends of a cleaning tube 40, respective connectors 41 and 41a are provided. In the endoscope 2, a fitting 11 communicably connected to a duct inside the endoscope 2 is provided. The connector 41 is an endoscope-side connector to be connected to the fitting 11 communicably connected to the duct inside the endoscope 2. The connector 41a is an apparatus-side connector to be connected to a port 37 for an air/water feeding/forceps port.

When the endoscope 2 is cleaned, a liquid such as a cleaning liquid supplied through the cleaning tube 40 is supplied from the connector 41 into the duct inside the endoscope 2 through fitting 11.

(Configuration of Connector 41)

Next, a configuration of the connector 41, which is an endoscope-side connector, will be described. FIG. 2 is a front view of the connector 41. FIG. 3 is a cross-sectional view of the connector 41 along line III-III in FIG. 2. FIG. 4 is an exploded and assembly view of the connector 41.

The connector 41 includes a body 42, a lid member 43, a fitting pressing member 44 and a cover member 45.

The body 42 is a resin cylindrical member, and includes a tube connection portion 42a that protrudes obliquely upward from a side face of an upper portion of the cylindrical member. The tube connection portion 42a includes a step portion at an outer circumferential face, and a resin cleaning tube 40 is put on and thereby connected to the tube connection portion 42a. The tube connection portion 42a includes a second opening, and the second opening 42a2 is communicably connected to a later-described first opening 44b1 via a later-described hollow portion 44b3. In other words, a fluid supplied from a fluid supply source can be introduced from the second opening and discharged from the first opening.

At an outer circumferential portion of a center portion of the body 42, a step portion 42b is formed along a circumferential direction. Below the step portion 42b, a circumferential projection portion 42c is formed along the circumferential direction. As described later, an end of the spring 51 abuts the projection portion 42c. Below the projection portion 42c, a plurality of (here, four) holes 42d are provided.

Also, in a lower portion of the body 42, a plurality of (here, four) holes 42e are formed in the circumferential direction.

6

An inner circumferential face of each hole 42e is an inclined surface whose inner diameter decreases from the outside toward the inside. As described later, each hole 42e receives a metal ball 52 from the outside, and each ball 52 catches on the tapered surface of the corresponding hole 42e, preventing the ball 52 from falling off to the inside of the body 42. Each of the holes 42d and 42e is an opening portion that brings the inside and the outside of a thin wall portion of the body 42, which is a cylindrical body, into communication with each other.

In the peripheries of the respective holes 42d, a protrusion portion 42f is formed so as to surround the respective holes 42d. Furthermore, as described later, a space 42g that allows a fluid to flow therein is formed between the step portion 42b and the protrusion portion 42f.

The resin lid member 43 is attached to an upper portion of the body 42. The lid member 43 includes a ring-shaped protrusion portion 43a having an outer diameter that is the same as an outer diameter of the upper portion of the body 42. At a lower portion of the lid member 43, an extension portion 43b that extends downward is provided, and an O-shaped ring 53 is attached to the extension portion 43b. The O-shaped ring 53 hermetically seals the inside of the body 42 when the lid member 43 is attached to the upper portion of the body 42.

Also, the extension portion 43b includes a recess portion 43c that opens downward. A spring 54 is provided inside the recess portion 43c, an upper end of the spring 54 abuts a bottom face 43c1 of the recess portion 43c, and a lower end of the spring 54 abuts an upper portion of the later-described fitting pressing member 44. The spring 54 is provided in a compressed state between the lid member 43 and the fitting pressing member 44.

The fitting pressing member 44 is made of a metal such as a stainless steel and has a circular cylindrical shape. A configuration of the fitting pressing member 44, which is an endoscope connection instrument, will be described later.

The cover member 45 is fitted on and thereby attached to the lower portion of the body 42. The cover member 45 is made of a metal such as a stainless steel and has a circular cylindrical shape, and in an upper portion of an inner circumferential face of the cover member 45, an inner circumferential groove 45a is formed along the circumferential direction. In the inner circumferential groove 45a, a C-shaped ring 55 made of a metal such as a stainless steel is fitted in the inner circumferential groove in such a manner that the C-shaped ring 55 is compressed inward in a radial direction.

The C-shaped ring 55 fitted in the inner circumferential groove 45a butts the step portion 42b of the body 42, restricting the cover member 45 from moving to an upper position in the body 42.

The cover member 45 includes an inward flange portion 45b at a lower portion. A spring 51 is disposed inside the cover member 45, and a lower end portion of the spring 51 abuts the inward flange portion 45b, and an upper end portion of the spring 51 abuts the projection portion 42c of the body 42. The spring 51 is disposed between the inward flange portion 45b and the projection portion 42c. Also, at a lower portion of an inner circumferential face of the cover member 45, a tapered portion 45c is formed.

The fitting pressing member 44, which is an endoscope connection instrument, is disposed inside the body 42.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the fitting pressing member 44 as viewed obliquely from underneath. The fitting pressing member 44 has a cylindrical shape and includes the hollow portion 44b3 inside. A recess portion 44a is formed along the circumferential direction in an outer circumferential face of the fitting pressing member 44.

Furthermore, the first opening **44b1** is formed in a lower portion of the fitting pressing member **44**. An opening **44b2** is formed in a side face of the fitting pressing member **44**. The fitting pressing member **44** includes the hollow portion **44b3** inside, the hollow portion **44b3** bringing the first openings **44b1** and **44b2** into communication with each other. The opening **44b2** communicably connects the hollow portion **44b3** inside the cylindrical fitting pressing member **44** and the outside.

In other words, the first opening **44b1** is an opening that opens inside the endoscope fitting **11**, and the opening **44b2** is an opening that is communicably connected to the first opening **44b1** and is connectable to a fluid supply source via the tube connection portion **42a**.

In an outer circumferential face below the opening **44b2** of the fitting pressing member **44**, a groove along the circumferential direction, that is, an outer circumferential groove **44c** is formed. An O-shaped ring **56** is attached to the outer circumferential groove **44c**.

In an opening **44b4** in an upper face of the fitting pressing member **44**, an annular step portion **44d** is formed. On the step portion **44d**, a spring **54** is arranged. Upon the lid member **43** being secured to the upper portion of the body **42** via an adhesive, an upper part of the spring **54** enters the recess portion **43c** of the extension portion **43b** in the lid member **43** and a lower part of the spring **54** abuts the step portion **44d** of the fitting pressing member **44**, whereby the spring **54** is arranged in a compressed state between a bottom face **43c1** of the recess portion **43c** and the step portion **44d**.

Therefore, the fitting pressing member **44** is biased downward relative to the lid member **43** by means of an elastic force generated as a result of the spring **54** being urged to expand.

Furthermore, the fitting pressing member **44** includes a narrowing portion **44e** at a lower portion. The narrowing portion **44e** includes a part that tapers downward. In the present embodiment, the narrowing portion **44e** has a conical shape. In other words, the narrowing portion **44e** provides a narrowing portion that covers a part of the hollow portion **44b3** and has a side face whose outer diameter increases from a predetermined position of the fitting pressing member **44** (position PL of a boundary between a later-described cylindrical portion **44g** and the narrowing portion **44e**) toward the opening **44b2**.

In a surface of the annular narrowing portion **44e**, a plurality of grooves **44f** formed along an axis direction are formed. The plurality of grooves **44f** have shapes that are mutually the same, and the grooves have the same length, the same width and the same depth. The plurality of grooves **44f** are each formed over a predetermined area from the predetermined position in the outer surface of the narrowing portion **44e**.

As described above, the fitting pressing member **44**, which is an endoscope connection instrument, is biased to the narrowing portion **44e** side by the spring **54**, which is an elastic member, inside the body **42**, which is a body member.

FIG. 6 is a bottom view of the fitting pressing member **44** as viewed from underneath. FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view of the narrowing portion **44e** along line VII-VII in FIG. 5. Here, eight grooves **44f** are formed at regular intervals along a longitudinal axis direction of the fitting pressing member **44** in the surface of the narrowing portion **44e**, and are symmetrical to one another with reference to a center axis. FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the part of the narrowing portion **44e** and the cylindrical portion **44g** as viewed obliquely from underneath.

As illustrated in FIGS. 6 to 8, the plurality of grooves **44f** are arranged so as to be symmetrical to one another with

reference to the center axis of the narrowing portion **44e**, which is a narrowing portion. Each of the plurality of grooves **44f** is formed so as to have a desired depth determined taking, e.g., a fluid leakage amount into account. It is desirable that the grooves **44f** have a depth that is constant from a distal end to a rear end. Furthermore, each of the plurality of grooves **44f** is formed along the axis direction of the narrowing portion **44e**, which is a narrowing portion, although not parallel to the center axis of the fitting pressing member **44**.

Note that here, the plurality of grooves **44f** have the same length, but all of the lengths of the plurality of grooves **44f** do not need to be the same.

Furthermore, the fitting pressing member **44** includes a cylindrical portion **44g** that extends downward from the narrowing portion **44e**.

The cylindrical portion **44g** is provided so as to extend downward from an end portion of the narrowing portion **44e**. In the fitting pressing member **44**, the cylindrical portion **44g** is provided from the lower opening to the predetermined position PL, and the inner hollow portion **44b3** exists inside the narrowing portion **44e** and the cylindrical portion **44g**. Therefore, the cylindrical portion **44g** covers a part of the hollow portion **44b3** communicably connected to the first opening **44b1** and the opening **44b2** and is formed from the first opening **44b1** to the predetermined position PL.

As described above, the cylindrical fitting pressing member **44** includes the cylindrical portion **44g** on the first opening **44b1** side to which the fitting **11** is attached, and the cylindrical portion **44g** is formed from the first opening **44b1** to the predetermined position PL. Also, the fitting pressing member **44** includes the narrowing portion **44e** whose outer diameter increases from an end portion of the cylindrical portion **44g** in a direction opposite to the first opening **44b1**. The cylindrical portion **44g** and the narrowing portion **44e** are formed so as to cover the inner hollow portion **44b3**.

The narrowing portion **44e** abuts and is pressed against an inside edge portion of the fitting **11** when the narrowing portion **44e** is in line contact with the inside edge portion of the fitting **11**.

(Operation)

An operation when the above-described connector **41** is attached to the fitting **11** of the endoscope **2** will be described.

FIG. 9 is a front view illustrating a state in which the connector **41** is attached to the fitting **11** of the endoscope **2**. FIG. 10 is a cross-sectional view illustrating a state in which the connector **41** is attached to the fitting **11**.

When the connector **41** is attached to the fitting **11**, the body **42** is pressed against the fitting **11** so that the narrowing portion **44e** of the fitting pressing member **44** is fitted in and pressed into an opening of the fitting **11** of the endoscope **2**.

As a result, the narrowing portion **44e** is pushed upward inside the body **42**, whereby the spring **54** is compressed. When the cover member **45** is pressed to the endoscope **2** side in the state in which the spring **54** is compressed, providing a state in which the four balls **52** can enter the lower face **11a1** side of an outward flange portion **11a** of the fitting **11**. Consequently, the inward flange portion **45b** of the cover member **45** can press the respective balls **52** inward in a radial direction of the body **42**.

Therefore, a part of each ball **52** protrudes from the inside of the corresponding hole **42e** and butts an outer circumferential edge on the lower side of the outward flange portion **11a** of the fitting **11**, preventing the connector **41** from coming off from the fitting **11**. Then, as illustrated in FIG. 9, a lower face of the cover member **45** abuts a surface of a sheath member **2a** of the endoscope **2** in such a manner that the lower face is in close contact with and thereby secured to the surface.

In other words, the cover member **45** covering the body **42** has a securing mechanism that when the fitting pressing member **44**, which is an endoscope connection instrument, is attached to the fitting **11** of the endoscope **2**, secures the fitting pressing member **44** to the fitting **11**.

As indicated by alternate long and two short dashes line LL1 in FIG. 10, a liquid such as a cleaning liquid is supplied from the cleaning tube **40** with the connector **41a** connected to a port **37** for air/water feeding/forceps port in the endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus **1** to a duct inside the endoscope **2** through the fitting **11**. The liquid such as a cleaning liquid enters from the opening **44b2** communicably connected to the endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus **1**, which is a fluid supply source, passes through the inner hollow portion **44b3**, and is discharged from the first opening **44b1** that opens inside the fitting **11** of the endoscope **2**, into the duct inside the endoscope **2**, for example, a treatment instrument insertion channel.

Also, as indicated by alternate long and two short dashes line LL2 in FIG. 10, the liquid discharged from the first opening **44b1** passes through the plurality of grooves **44f** between the narrowing portion **44e** and the inside edge portion of the fitting **11** that are in line contact with each other, and flows also to the inside of the body **42**.

The liquid that has flowed to the inside of the body **42** flows out from a gap between the cover member **45** and the sheath member **2a** of the endoscope **2** as indicated by alternate long and two short dashes line LL3 in FIG. 10, and/or passes between the cover member **45** and the body **42** via the holes **42e** provided in the body **42** and flows outside of the connector **41** as indicated by alternate long and two short dashes line LL4.

Here, since in the fitting **11** and the fitting pressing member **44**, the surface of the narrowing portion **44e** and the inside edge portion of the fitting **11** are in mere line contact with each other, the liquid such as a cleaning liquid comes into contact with almost an entire outer surface of the fitting **11**, providing enhancement in capability of cleaning/disinfecting the fitting **11**.

Furthermore, the connector **41** attached to the fitting **11** may rattle relative to the fitting **11** because of, e.g., a force imposed on the cleaning tube **40**.

However, since the cylindrical portion **44g** extends from the narrowing portion **44e**, in the case of such rattling, the cylindrical portion **44g** butts an inner circumferential face of the fitting **11**, whereby inclination of the connector **41** is restricted.

FIG. 11 is a diagram for describing a state in which the fitting pressing member **44** is inclined most as a result of the connector **41** rattling. As illustrated in FIG. 11, upon the fitting pressing member **44** being inclined and the cylindrical portion **44g** thereby hitting against the inner circumferential face of the fitting **11** at point P1, the fitting pressing member **44** cannot be inclined any further. In other words, the cylindrical portion **44g** provides an inclination restricting portion that restricts inclination of the fitting pressing member **44**. Therefore, the cylindrical portion **44g** restricts the fitting pressing member **44** from being inclined at an angle that is equal to or exceeds a predetermined angle, providing the effect of preventing a sharp decrease in outflow amount of a liquid from the first opening **44b1** when the fitting pressing member **44** is inclined and thus stabilizing the outflow amount.

Also, although as illustrated in, e.g., FIG. 8, the plurality of grooves **44f** are provided over a large area of the narrowing portion **44e** along the axis direction of the cylindrical portion **44g**, in consideration of the aforementioned rattling of the

connector **41**, each groove **44f** only needs to be formed so as to include at least an area TR that comes into contact with the inside edge portion of the fitting **11**, which is illustrated in FIG. 11, in a maximum range of rattling. In other words, a structure in which the respective grooves **44f** all have a dent in the area TR and the dents of some of the grooves **44f** further extend downward or upward may be provided. In FIG. 11, the fitting pressing member **44** is inclined, a position at point P2 on the upper side of the narrowing portion **44e** is in contact with the inside edge portion of the fitting **11**, and a position at point P3 on the lower side of the narrowing portion **44e** is in contact with the inside edge portion of the fitting **11**. Therefore, the area TR is a region extending between a circumferential line CL1 that passes through point P2 in the narrowing portion **44e** and a circumferential line CL2 that passes through point P3 in the narrowing portion **44e** at the time of maximum rattling.

Also, since in the aforementioned TR, the plurality of grooves **44f** are definitely located between the narrowing portion **44e** and the inside edge portion of the fitting **11**, even if the connector **41** is inclined relative to the fitting **11** because of rattling, a plurality of gaps between the plurality of grooves **44f** and the fitting **11** do not largely change in size. Therefore, there is almost no change in amount of leakage of a liquid such as cleaning liquid from the plurality of gaps during cleaning and disinfecting.

In other words, each groove **44f** only needs to be formed in the region of the contemplated area TR extending over a circumference of the narrowing portion **44e**, which is indicated by the alternate long and two short dashes lines in FIG. 11.

Also, inclination of the connector **41** due to rattling such as described above is restricted also by the cover member **45** and the body **42**. FIG. 12 is a diagram for describing a state when the connector rattles.

In FIG. 12, if the connector **41** is inclined as a result of a load being imposed thereon in a direction indicated by arrow A0, inclination of the fitting pressing member **44** is restricted by the cylindrical portion **44g** of the fitting pressing member **44**; however, for example, in FIG. 12, the connector **41** is inclined so as to lift in a direction indicated by arrow A1, a bottom portion of the cover member **45** butts the sheath member **2a** of the endoscope **2** at point P4, whereby inclination of the connector **41** is restricted also by the cover member **45**. Furthermore, likewise, a bottom portion of the body **42** butts the sheath member **2a** of the endoscope **2** at point P5, whereby inclination of the connector **41** is restricted also by the body **42**.

Therefore, with the connector **41** according to the present embodiment, inclination of the connector **41** is restricted not only by the cylindrical portion **44g** of the fitting pressing member **44** butting the inner circumferential face of the fitting **11**, but also by of the body **42** and the cover member **45** of the connector **41**.

Note that although in the above-described example, the end portion of the cylindrical portion **44g** hits against the inner circumferential face of the fitting **11**, a rib, that is, an annular projection portion may be provided at the distal end portion of the cylindrical portion.

FIG. 13 is a diagram for describing an example in which a projection portion is provided at the distal end portion of the cylindrical portion of the fitting pressing member **44**. As illustrated in FIG. 13, an annular projection portion **44h** is provided at a distal end portion of a cylindrical portion **44g1**.

Therefore, inclination of the fitting pressing member **44** such as mentioned above can be restricted also by the projec-

11

tion portion **44h** provided at the distal end portion of the cylindrical portion **44g1** illustrated in FIG. 13.

Still furthermore, although in the above-described example, as illustrated in FIG. 8, the narrowing portion has a shape that is a part of a conical shape, but may have a shape that is a part of a hemispherical shape.

FIG. 14 is a perspective view of a fitting pressing member including a narrowing portion having a spherical zone shape as viewed obliquely from underneath.

Although in the above-described example, the surface of the narrowing portion **44e**, which is a narrowing portion, has a tapered shape, and is a partial face of a surface shape of a conical shape, the narrowing portion in FIG. 14 has a bowl shape, and a surface thereof is a surface of a spherical zone shape.

A narrowing portion **44e1** of a fitting pressing member **44** in FIG. 14 has a surface shape obtained by cutting a hemisphere along two planes. In other words, the narrowing portion **44e1** has a shape that is a part of a bowl. Therefore, the narrowing portion **44e1** of the fitting pressing member **44** in FIG. 14 consistently remains in line contact with the inner circumferential edge portion of the fitting **11**, which has a circular shape, even upon occurrence of rattling, which is described with reference to FIG. 11.

Accordingly, an amount of leakage of a liquid such as a cleaning liquid from the plurality of gaps during cleaning and disinfecting is consistently the same.

As described above, the present embodiment enables provision of an endoscope connection instrument that can reliably clean and disinfect a fitting part communicably connected to a duct inside an endoscope.

Also, because of the simplicity of the configuration of the endoscope connection instrument according to the present embodiment, the present embodiment enables provision of an endoscope connection instrument that can reliably clean and disinfect a fitting part communicably connected to a duct inside an endoscope with a simple configuration.

Note that the above-described connector **41** can also be regarded as an endoscope connection instrument.

Second Embodiment

Although the connector **41** according to the first embodiment includes the fitting pressing member **44**, the body **42** including the tube connection portion **42a** to which the cleaning tube **40** is to be connected, and the cover member **45**, a connector according to a second embodiment includes a fitting pressing member and a securing member.

Components and configuration parts of the connector according to the present embodiment that are the same as those of the first embodiment are provided with reference numerals that are the same as those of the first embodiment, and description thereof will be omitted.

FIG. 15 is a diagram for describing a state before a connector according to the present embodiment is attached to a fitting.

As illustrated in FIG. 15, a connector **61** according to the present embodiment includes a fitting pressing member **62**, which is an endoscope connection instrument, and a securing member **63**. The connector **61** is a connector provided at one end of a cleaning tube **40** to be connected to an endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus **1**, and at the other end of the cleaning tube **40**, a connector **41a** is provided, and the connector **41a** is to be connected to a port **37** for an air/water feeding/forceps port in the endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus **1**.

12

The fitting pressing member **62** is made of a metal such as a stainless steel and has a cylindrical shape. At a proximal end portion of the fitting pressing member **62**, a tube connection portion **62a** for connecting the cleaning tube **40** to the fitting pressing member **62** is provided. The tube connection portion **62a** includes a circumferential projection portion **62a1** for increasing a diameter of the cleaning tube **40** from the inside and thereby securing the cleaning tube **40**, which is made of a resin, to an outer circumferential portion.

At a distal end portion of the fitting pressing member **62**, a narrowing portion **44e** and a cylindrical portion **44g** are provided toward a distal end. A plurality of grooves **44f** are formed in an outer circumferential face of the narrowing portion **44e**.

Note that although, here, the narrowing portion **44e** has a shape that is a part of a conical shape, the narrowing portion **44e** may have a spherical zone shape such as illustrated in FIG. 14.

The fitting pressing member **62** includes a diameter-increased portion **62b** between the tube connection portion **62a** and the narrowing portion **44e**. The diameter-increased portion **62b** includes a step portion **62c** at a boundary portion between the tube connection portion **62a** and the diameter-increased portion **62b** on the proximal end side.

The securing member **63** is a resin plate member and has a squared U shape. In respective arm portions **63b** and **63c** at opposite ends of a shaft portion **63a** of the securing member **63**, cutout portions **63b1** and **63c1** that receive the fitting pressing member **62** and a fitting **11**, respectively, are formed (see FIG. 16).

As illustrated in FIG. 15, a distance **LA** between the arm portions **63b** and **63c** on the opposite sides of the securing member **63** is substantially the same or shorter than a distance between a lower face **11a1** of an outward flange portion of the fitting **11** and the step portion **62c** of the diameter-increased portion **62b** in a state in which the narrowing portion **44e** of the fitting pressing member **62** is inserted in an opening of the fitting **11**.

The narrowing portion **44e** of the fitting pressing member **62** is inserted to the inside of the fitting **11** along a direction indicated by arrow **A2**, and subsequently, the securing member **63** is attached along a direction indicated by arrow **A3** so that the cutout portions **63b1** and **63c1** receive the fitting pressing member **62** and the fitting **11**, respectively, whereby the fitting pressing member **62** is secured to the fitting **11** by the securing member **63**.

In other words, the securing member **63** is a securing member that secures the fitting pressing member **62** to the fitting **11** in a state in which a distal end of the narrowing portion **44e** is inserted in the fitting **11**.

FIG. 16 is a perspective view illustrating a state in which the fitting pressing member **62** is secured to the fitting **11** by the securing member **63**. FIG. 17 is a front view illustrating a state in which the fitting pressing member **62** is secured to the fitting **11** by the securing member **63**.

As illustrated in FIGS. 16 and 17, in a state in which the narrowing portion **44e** is inserted into the opening portion of the fitting **11**, the fitting pressing member **62** is secured to the fitting **11** by the securing member **63**. In this state, a liquid such as a cleaning liquid is supplied from the cleaning tube **40** into a duct communicably connected to the opening portion of the fitting **11**, and the narrowing portion **44e** is in line contact with an inside edge portion of the opening portion of the fitting **11**. Therefore, the liquid such as a cleaning liquid comes into contact with almost an entire outer surface of the fitting **11**, and thus, the entire fitting **11** is sufficiently cleaned and disinfected.

13

Note that although in the above-described example, the securing member **63** is a component that is separate from the endoscope **2** and the endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus **1**, the securing member may be a member secured to the endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus **1**. In other words, the securing member may be provided in the endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus **1**.

For example, in FIG. **17**, a plurality of (here, four) projection members **71** and **72** such as indicated by the dotted lines are provided on a cleaning/disinfecting bath **23** so that the fitting pressing member **62** and the fitting **11** engage with the plurality of projection members **71** and **72**, whereby the fitting pressing member **62** is secured to the fitting **11**. The two projection members **71** come into contact with the step portion **62c** of the diameter-increased portion **62b**, and the two projection members **72** come into contact with the lower face **11a1** of the outward flange portion of the fitting **11**. Then, a distance between the two projection members **71** and the two projection members **72** is substantially the same as the distance between the step portion **62c** and the lower face **11a1** in a state in which the narrowing portion **44e** is inserted in the opening portion of the fitting **11**, or is slightly shorter than the distance between the step portion **62c** and the lower face **11a1** in a state in which the narrowing portion **44e** is inserted in the opening portion of the fitting **11**.

Accordingly, the present embodiment enables provision of an endoscope connection instrument that can reliably clean and disinfect a fitting part communicably connected to a duct inside an endoscope.

Also, because of the simplicity of the configuration of the endoscope connection instrument according to the present embodiment, the present embodiment enables provision of an endoscope connection instrument that can reliably clean and disinfect a fitting part communicably connected to a duct inside an endoscope with a simple configuration.

Note that the above-described connector **61** can also be regarded as an endoscope connection instrument.
(Cleaning of Gas Button at Operation Portion)

When an operation portion **3** of an endoscope **2** is cleaned, the endoscope **2** is received in the cleaning/disinfecting bath **23** with a gas button provided at the operation portion **3** in a depressed state.

FIG. **18** is a diagram illustrating a state in which a sliding apparatus that receives supply of a liquid such as a cleaning liquid and supplies the liquid to an internal cylinder is attached in the vicinity of a gas button at the operation portion **3**.

At a surface of the operation portion **3** of the endoscope **2**, various types of knobs and various types of buttons are provided, and one of such buttons is a gas button **101**. The gas button **101** is a button to be operated when a predetermined gas is protruded from a distal end portion of an insertion portion **4**, and upon the gas button **101** being depressed, an internal valve is opened and the predetermined gas is discharged from the distal end portion of the insertion portion **4** via a gas duct.

In the vicinity of the gas button, a suction cylinder and an air/water feeding cylinder are disposed, the sliding apparatus **102** engages with respective flange portions of these cylinders and is slid, and thereby attached to the suction cylinder and the air/water feeding cylinder. In FIG. **18**, a part of the air/water feeding cylinder **103** is illustrated. At a tip portion of the gas button **101**, a button operation member **101a** protrudes from an opening portion of a support member **101b** that supports the button operation member **101a** so that the button

14

operation member **101a** can be depressed. The support member **101b** includes an outward flange portion **101c** at an upper portion.

A liquid supply tube **104** is connected to the sliding apparatus **102**, and the sliding apparatus **102** is configured so as to, upon the sliding apparatus **102** being attached to the suction cylinder and the air/water feeding cylinder, supply a liquid such as a cleaning liquid from the tube **104** to the respective cylinders. During cleaning/disinfection, the liquid supplied from the tube **104** via the sliding apparatus **102** cleans/disinfects the inside of the two cylinders communicably interconnected inside, and the gas button **101** is depressed to provide a state in which the internal valve is opened, whereby the liquid such as a cleaning liquid is supplied into the gas duct, enabling the gas duct to be cleaned/disinfected. Here, an adapter **111** is attached to the gas button **101**, enabling the gas button **101** to be brought into a depressed state.

FIG. **19** is a perspective view of the adapter **111** for bringing the gas button **101** into a depressed state as viewed obliquely from above. FIG. **20** is a perspective view of the adapter **111** as viewed obliquely from underneath. FIG. **21** is a cross-sectional view of the adapter **111** along line XXI-XXI in FIG. **19**. FIG. **22** is a cross-sectional view of the adapter **111** along line XXII-XXII in FIG. **19**.

As illustrated in FIGS. **20** and **22**, where a direction in which the adapter **111** is attached to the gas button **101** is an axis direction **Ox**, the adapter **111** has a squared U shape in a cross-section perpendicular to the axis direction **Ox**. The adapter **111** is made of a resin, and is a cap member including a plate-shaped portion **112**, and side wall portions **113** on the opposite sides of the plate-shaped portion **112**. Also, as illustrated in FIG. **22**, end portions of the two side wall portions **113** include respective protrusion portions **113a** that protrude in respective directions in which the protrusion portions **113a** face each other. Furthermore, a groove **115** along the axis direction **Ox** is formed on the inner side of each side wall portion **113**.

As described above, the gas button **101** has the outward flange portion **101c**. The outward flange portion **101c** has a size and a shape that allow the outward flange portion **101c** to be inserted in the grooves **115**. The outward flange portion **101c** has an outer diameter that is smaller than a distance **GA** between respective bottom parts of the two grooves **115** facing each other, but is larger than a distance **GB** between the protrusion portions **113a** facing each other. In other words, the adapter **111** is configured so that the distance **GA** between the respective bottom portions of the two grooves **115** facing each other is longer than the outward flange portion **101c** and the distance **GB** between the two protrusion portions **113a** facing each other is shorter than the outward flange portion **101c**.

On the distal end side of the plate-shaped portion **112**, a trapezoidal extension portion **114** is provided. On the proximal end side of the plate-shaped portion **112**, a butting portion **116** that the gas button **101** butts, the butting portion **116** protruding in a direction that is the same as the direction in which the side wall portions **113** protrude is provided.

Between the side wall portions **113** on the opposite sides of the butting portion **116**, gaps **116a** and **116b** are formed, whereby, as described later, a liquid such as a cleaning liquid that has flowed in from the extension portion **114** side easily flows through the gaps **116a** and **116b**.

The plate-shaped portion **112** includes a flat surface **112a** on the inner side of the adapter **111** having a squared U shape. Furthermore, the extension portion **114** on the distal end side of the plate-shaped portion **112** includes an inclined surface **114a**. As illustrated in FIG. **21**, the inclined surface **114a** is a

15

surface that is continuous with the flat surface **112a**, and the inclined surface **114a** is formed in such a manner that a thickness of the extension portion **114** gradually decreases from the flat surface **112a** toward a distal end portion of the extension portion **114**.

Also, the adapter **111** includes a hole **117** for putting a piece of string for loss prevention, on the side opposite to the extension portion **114**.

An operation of the adapter **111** having the above-described configuration will be described.

The adapter **111** is attached to the gas button **101** in a direction illustrated in arrow **B1** in FIG. **18** so that the flange portion **101c** of the gas button **101** is inserted in the groove **115**.

FIG. **23** is a perspective view illustrating a state in which the adapter **111** is attached to the gas button **101**. FIG. **24** is a cross-sectional view of the adapter **111** along line XXIV-XXIV in FIG. **23** and illustrates a state in which the adapter **111** is attached to the gas button **101**. FIG. **25** is a cross-sectional view of the adapter **111** along line XXV-XXV in FIG. **23** and illustrates a state at a certain point during the adapter **111** being attached to the gas button **101**.

When the adapter **111** is attached to the gas button **101**, the adapter **111** is attached to the gas button **101** in the direction indicated by arrow **B1** so that the outward flange portion **101c** is inserted in the groove **115**.

As illustrated in FIG. **25**, the outward flange portion **101c** is restricted from moving upward/downward in the groove **115**, and thus, even if the adapter **111** moves toward the gas button **101**, the support member **101b** does not move upward/downward relative to the adapter **111**.

However, as the adapter **111** moves further toward the gas button **101**, an upper face of the button operation member **101a** abuts the inclined surface **114a** of the extension portion **114** and moves in a direction indicated by arrow **B2** while the upper face slides on the inclined surface **114a**, that is, the button operation member **101a** is pushed in.

Then, as the adapter **111** is moved further in the direction indicated by arrow **B1**, finally, the flange portion abuts the butting portion **116**, providing a state in which the outward flange portion **101c** is completely inserted in the groove **115**. Upon the outward flange portion **101c** being completely inserted in the groove **115**, the button operation member **101a** is completely pushed in the support member **101b** by the flat surface **112a**. Also, the button operation member **101a** is biased in a direction in which the button operation member **101a** is pushed back to the tip portion side, by internal spring pressure. Therefore, upon the adapter **111** being attached to the gas button **101**, the button operation member **101a** is brought into a depressed state.

Therefore, when the adapter **111** is attached to the gas button **101** and the endoscope **2** is put in the endoscope cleaning apparatus **1** and cleaned/disinfected, a liquid such as a cleaning liquid is supplied also into the gas duct, enabling the inside of the gas duct to be cleaned/disinfected.

Also, in a state in which the outward flange portion **101c** is completely inserted in the groove **115**, as indicated by the dotted lines in FIG. **20**, a liquid such as a cleaning liquid from the sliding apparatus **102** side flows in from a gap between the inside of the adapter **111** and the gas button **101** and passes through the gaps **116a** and **116b** on the opposite sides of the butting portion **116**.

Therefore, when the adapter **111** is attached to the gas button **101** and the endoscope **2** is put in the endoscope cleaning apparatus **1** and cleaned/disinfected, a part of contact between the adapter **111** and the gas button **101** is small, and thus, a liquid such as a cleaning liquid flows smoothly on

16

an outer surface of the gas button **101**, enabling the outer surface of the gas button **101** to be sufficiently cleaned/disinfected.

As described above, each of the embodiments described above enables provision of an endoscope connection instrument that can reliably clean and disinfect a fitting part communicably connected to a duct inside an endoscope.

The present invention is not limited to the above-described embodiments, various modifications, alterations and the like are possible without departing from the spirit of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. An endoscope connection instrument to be connected to an endoscope fitting, the endoscope connection instrument comprising:

a first opening having a predetermined outer diameter in order to open inside the endoscope fitting when the endoscope connection instrument is connected to the endoscope fitting;

a second opening that is communicably connected to the first opening, is arranged on a fluid supply source side relative to the first opening, and allows a fluid from the fluid supply source to flow therein via a cleaning tube;

a hollow portion that is an internal space communicably connected to the first opening and the second opening;

a cylindrical portion to be inserted into the endoscope fitting, the cylindrical portion covering a part from the first opening to a predetermined position of the hollow portion;

a narrowing portion to be inserted into the endoscope fitting, the narrowing portion including a side face whose outer diameter increases over a predetermined distance from the predetermined position toward the second opening, and covering the hollow portion; and

a plurality of grooves formed over a predetermined area from the predetermined position in an outer surface of the narrowing portion.

2. The endoscope connection instrument according to claim 1, wherein a shape of the side face of the narrowing portion is a tapered shape or a bowl shape.

3. The endoscope connection instrument according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of grooves are arranged so as to be symmetrical to each other with reference to a center axis of the narrowing portion.

4. The endoscope connection instrument according to claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of grooves has a fixed depth.

5. The endoscope connection instrument according to claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of grooves is formed along an axis direction of the narrowing portion.

6. The endoscope connection instrument according to claim 2, wherein the shape of the side face is the tapered shape, and a surface of the narrowing portion having the tapered shape is a partial face of a surface shape of a conical shape.

7. The endoscope connection instrument according to claim 2, wherein the shape of the side face is the bowl shape, and a surface of the narrowing portion having the bowl shape is a spherical zone-shaped face.

8. The endoscope connection instrument according to claim 1, further comprising a fitting pressing member including the first opening, the second opening, the hollow portion, the cylindrical portion, the narrowing portion and the plurality of grooves; and

an elastic member connected to the fitting pressing member.

9. The endoscope connection instrument according to claim 8, further comprising a tube connection portion to which the cleaning tube is to be connected.

10. The endoscope connection instrument according to claim 8, further comprising a cover member covering the fitting pressing member, 5

wherein the elastic member is arranged between the fitting pressing member and the cover member, and

the cover member includes a securing mechanism that secures the endoscope connection instrument to the endoscope fitting when the endoscope connection instrument is attached to the endoscope fitting. 10

11. The endoscope connection instrument according to claim 1, further comprising a securing member that secures the endoscope connection instrument to the endoscope fitting in a state in which a distal end of the narrowing portion is inserted in the endoscope fitting. 15

12. An endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus comprising the endoscope connection instrument according to claim 1, the endoscope connection instrument being connected to the endoscope cleaning/disinfecting apparatus via the cleaning tube. 20

* * * * *